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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR
THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES
EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR
DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA
Eighth session
Geneva, 5-16 February 1996
Agenda item 5

# REVIEW OF THE SITUATION AS REGARDS EXTRABUDGETARY FUNDS

Note by the Secretariat

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its Resolution 47/188 of 22 December 1992, the General Assembly established a Special Voluntary Fund and a Trust Fund for the INCD process, both administered by the head of the Ad Hoc Secretariat under the authority of the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN). These funds were established with a view:

(a) to assist developing countries affected by desertification and drought, in particular the least developed countries, to participate fully and effectively in the negotiation process; and

(b) to supplement limited regular budget resources in financing the negotiating process.

2. Subsequently, Resolution 49/234 of 23 December 1994 adopted by the 49th session of the General Assembly extended the mandate of the two funds for the interim period. It also amended the terms of reference of the INCD Trust Fund to take into consideration the recommendations of the Committee regarding the participation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in its sessions.

3. This document reviews pledges and contributions made to both INCD funds. It also summarizes the Secretariat's utilization of UN regular budget resources during the biennium 1994-1995. It has not been possible to address in this document the regular budget allotment for the biennium 1996-1997 since the budget will not be adopted until the end of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. This issue will therefore be addressed during the ninth session of the Committee.

## II. REGULAR BUDGET RESOURCES

4. Regular budget resources are used essentially to cover expenses related to staff, travel, communications and consultancies, as well as standard operating expenses such as maintenance and supplies. Appendix A shows the Secretariat's total regular budget allotment for the biennium 1994-1995 by object of expenditure. Appendix B shows regular budget expenditures during that biennium through 31 October 1995.

5. Various expenditures on staff covered the services of the 5 professional and 4 general service posts carried under the Regular Budget (1 D-2, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 4 GS).

6. For the biennium 1994-1995 an allotment of US$ 396,900 was issued for official travel of staff. The bulk of this allotment issued under object expenditure 242 (official travel of staff) was used for the participation of the Secretariat staff in the third, fifth, sixth and seventh sessions of the INCD, held respectively in New York, Paris, New York and Nairobi.

7. Consultancy resources were mainly used for meetings and services of the International Panel of Experts on Desertification. Consultants were also employed in 1995 for the organization and promotion of awareness and information campaigns as well as for ad hoc activities for which the relevant expertise was not available within the Secretariat.

## III. TRUST FUND

8. The General Assembly, by its Resolution 47/188, paragraph 13, decided that the "negotiating process shall be funded through existing UN budgetary resources, without negatively affecting its programmed activities, and through voluntary contributions to a Trust Fund established specifically for that purpose for the duration of the negotiations." It also urged "governments, and regional economic integration organizations to contribute generously to the Trust Fund."

9. The situation concerning contributions to the Trust Fund as of 31 November 1995 is shown in Appendix C.

10. As of 31 October 1995, recorded expenditures from the Trust Fund for the biennium 1994-1995 amounted to US$ 2,653,986. Trust Fund expenditures incurred in support of Secretariat activities are summarized in Appendix D.

11. The Secretariat has established contacts and concluded agreements with several countries, as well as with agencies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations, to enlist their support for ongoing extrabudgetary activities in the following four fields, which the sections below summarize.

(a) Organization of national awareness seminars

(b) Subregional consultation processes

(c) Public information

(d) Involvement of grass-roots organizations in the implementation of the Convention

**Organization of national awareness seminars**

12. The Secretariat has continued to facilitate the launching of national awareness seminars concerning the future implementation of the Convention and action during the interim period. By promoting contacts between the various partners working at the national level, these seminars will facilitate the integration into the implementation process of institutions or organizations that may not yet be involved.

13. As stated in Document A/AC.241/41, each seminar can be organized at a cost of roughly US$ 8,000. In this respect, the Government of Switzerland has contributed US$ 183,500 for the organization of national seminars in Africa. The Swiss contribution has allowed the launching of the seminars in a first group of twenty-one African countries. The government of Japan has also earmarked US$ 100,000 of its contribution to the Trust Fund for the organization of these seminars.

14. As presentation and exchange fora, these seminars also provide the opportunity to bring together important actors in civil society, as well as field representatives of donor agencies. With the financial support of the above mentioned countries, the Secretariat has been able to facilitate the holding of these seminars in the following countries during 1995:

| | |
|---|---|
| *April* | Cape Verde, Eritrea |
| *May* | Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Mauritania |
| *June* | Benin, Ethiopia, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Zambia |
| *July* | Sudan, Uganda |
| *September* | Cote d'Ivoire |
| *October* | Guinea |
| *November* | Togo, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, South Africa |
| *December* | Tunisia |

15. The Secretariat is discussing the modalities of financing further awareness seminars with other interested donor countries. If sufficient resources are available, the objective would be to hold such seminars in all countries that request them, in Africa as well as in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Subregional consultation processes**

16. The subregional consultation processes take the form of seminars organized by a relevant subregional organization acting as coordinating agency with the support of the Secretariat. They bring together representatives of the governments of a given subregion, donor countries and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to discuss possibilities for the implementation in the subregion of the Convention as well as action during the interim period. They are organized in conjunction with a workshop that gathers media professionals of the same subregion.

17. These seminars and workshops provide all parties involved with an opportunity to increase their level of knowledge about the Convention and to formulate a clear and common view of their obligations and respective roles. These fora also allow participants to be informed of the latest developments regarding the Convention and their impact on activities in the subregion.

18. The Government of Denmark has contributed US$ 112,900 to the Trust Fund to help organize subregional consultations in East Africa and the Government of Norway US$ 142,000 for those in Southern Africa. The Government of Spain has contributed US$ 46,000 toward the cost of the organization of the subregional consultation in North Africa. The Government of Japan has also earmarked US$ 50,000 of its contribution to the Trust Fund for the organization of the subregional consultation in North Africa. The Government of Canada has provided financing directly to the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) for the West African consultations.

**Public information**

19. The Secretariat continues to face an increasing demand for information, and is in the process of implementing the information programme launched earlier. It is centred on the production and distribution of materials giving balanced information on the various dimensions of the Convention, in easily accessible language. The target audiences include national policy makers, development practitioners, economic and business leaders, NGO's, journalists and the public in general.

20. These materials comprise the following, some of which are packaged in a Convention kit. At this stage the Secretariat is overseeing the production of the Convention kit in all UN languages.

(a) The Convention text in an attractive booklet format, with an accompanying explanatory leaflet, in Arabic, English, French, Spanish, and soon in Chinese and Russian

(b) A simplified version of the Convention in a booklet entitled "Down to Earth", in Arabic, English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and later in other languages including the languages most widely spoken in affected areas

(c) Ten fact sheets covering the main aspects of the Convention and providing policy makers and other target audiences with greater access to high quality information in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and soon in Russian and Chinese

(d) A slide presentation to assist in promotional activities for the ratification and implementation of the Convention

(e) A "home page" on the Internet World Wide Web containing INCD documents and other materials related to the Convention

(f) Azimuth video productions on combating desertification including a newly filmed one in China: From the Great Wall to the Green Wall

21. In initiating its public information programme, the Secretariat utilized significant assistance from the governments of Denmark, Japan and Spain, as well as from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Denmark contributed through the Trust Fund for the production of the Convention Kit and Convention Booklet. Switzerland, IFAD and UNEP contributed directly to the Centre for Our Common Future, a Geneva-based international NGO, which supervised the writing, editing and production of the simplified version of the Convention in English. UNEP's Information Unit for Conventions also supervised and co-financed the initial production of the Convention booklet and explanatory leaflet in English, French and Arabic. It also made possible the initiation of a World Wide Web home page on desertification.

**Grass-roots involvement in the implementation of the Convention**

22. "IFAD has agreed to contribute US$ 400,000 to the INCD Trust Fund. The Memorandum of Understanding prepared to this end has already been signed. As indicated below, part of this contribution will be used for the recruitment of one general service staff member. The balance is earmarked for facilitation and coordination of activities related to the involvement of affected communities in the implementation of the Convention, as well as for promotion of initiatives for dissemination of information on implementation. In addition, the Secretariat is in contact with several governments and organizations to obtain financing for NGO participation in INCD sessions. In this regard, the government of Japan has agreed to earmark US$ 80,000 for the organization of an Asian NGO conference on desertification and US$ 50,000 for the participation of NGO's in the sessions of the Committee". The government of Japan has also put forward US$20,000 to support NGO projects aimed at raising awareness of the Convention in their region and to enhance NGO capacity in the field of implementation of the Convention. In addition, a pledge of US$70,000 was received from the government of Switzerland to support the participation of representatives from the NGO community in the eighth session of the Committee.

23. In light of the discussion above and given the current status of the Trust Fund, the INCD may wish to call upon potential donors to contribute to the Fund and give further guidance to the Executive Secretary concerning its future use.

## IV. SPECIAL VOLUNTARY FUND

24. The current status of contributions received for the Special Voluntary Fund is shown in Appendix E. After provision for support costs and operating reserve, a balance of approximately US$452,500 remains available in that Fund. This amount represents the balance from the seventh session, the balance available as operating cash reserve and funds from recent contributions. In allocating the remaining funds, priority will continue to be given to least developed countries affected by drought and desertification. The Secretariat will circulate, during the session, as an addendum to this document, a list of countries whose participation has been financed through the Fund.

25. There are now two budget scenarios for the Special Voluntary Fund, depending on the level of contributions. The first would fund the travel of at least one representative from affected developing countries to two INCD meetings per year, with two representatives from affected least developed countries. The second, assuming insufficient contribution levels, would cover only one representative from least developed affected countries.

26. In light of the above and given the current status of Special Voluntary Fund, the INCD may wish to call upon potential donors to contribute to the Fund and give further guidance to the Executive Secretary concerning its future use.

## V. SECRETARIAT STAFFING SITUATION

27. The staffing situation of the Secretariat, as of 31 October 1995, is shown in Appendix F. It does not include consultants or temporary staff hired to assist the Secretariat during sessions of the Committee.

28. Contractual arrangements relating to the positions covered by the Trust Fund continue to be of a short-term nature owing to the uncertainty of funding. The extension of the contracts of six of the seven staff members currently financed from extrabudgetary resources depends on the timely receipt of contributions.

29. The following information is of relevance to the staffing situation of the Secretariat:

(a) FAO has extended the services of an environmental lawyer to assist the Secretariat on a part-time basis.

(b) IFAD has approved a contribution of US$ 400,000 to the Trust Fund. Part of this contribution will be earmarked for the recruitment of a general service staff member, as indicated in paragraph 22 above.

(c) WMO has seconded one professional and one general service staff member to the Secretariat.

(d) UNEP has earmarked US$ 50,000 of its most recent contribution to the Trust Fund for general temporary assistance in the Secretariat.

(e) Italy has recently finalized its internal procedures for the secondment of a junior professional officer to the Secretariat, who will work for one year in the field of media and communications.

(f) One temporary staff member has been recruited using Trust Fund resources to assist professional staff members in their daily work.

(g) Canada, Switzerland and Sweden continue to fund the services of one professional staff member each, as shown in Appendix F.

30. Administrative support to the Secretariat is provided by a Geneva based administrative unit of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD) consisting of one professional officer and two general service staff. The unit, which functions within the framework of the Executive Office of the Department located at United Nations Headquarters, New York, also serves the Interim Secretariat of the Convention on Climate Change.

APPENDIX A

TOTAL REGULAR BUDGET ALLOTMENTS FOR 1994 AND 1995
BY OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE
(US DOLLARS)

| OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE | TOTAL ALLOTMENT 1994-1995* | TOTAL ALLOTMENT 1994** | TOTAL ALLOTMENT 1995 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 010 Established Posts | 1,574,900.00 | 835,500.00 | 739,400.00 |
| 040 Consultants | 699,200.00 | 537,700.00 | 161,500.00 |
| 050 Overtime & night differential | 10,300.00 | 4,900.00 | 5,400.00 |
| 100 Common staff costs | 511,100.00 | 277,900.00 | 233,200.00 |
| 113 Representation allowance | 1,200.00 | 600.00 | 600.00 |
| 242 Other official travel of staff | 396,900.00 | 123,500.00 | 273,400.00 |
| 430 Rental of furniture and equipment | 33,500.00 | 13,600.00 | 19,900.00 |
| 440 Communications | 118,100.00 | 37,400.00 | 80,700.00 |
| 451 Official Functions | 6,300.00 | 4,000.00 | 2,300.00 |
| 490 Miscellaneous Services | 12,600.00 | 10,100.00 | 2,500.00 |
| 500 Supplies and materials | 16,000.00 | 10,200.00 | 5,800.00 |
| 610 Office furniture and equipment | 9,000.00 | 8,300.00 | 700.00 |
| 620 Data processing equipment | 39,500.00 | 31,700.00 | 7,800.00 |
| **TOTAL** | **3,428,600.00** | **1,895,400.00** | **1,533,200.00** |

* As recorded in 31.10.1995 allotment report
** As recorded in final 1994 allotment report

APPENDIX B

TOTAL EXPENDITURES INCURRED IN 1994 AND 1995 IN THE REGULAR BUDGET
BY OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE
(US DOLLARS)

| OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE | TOTAL EXPENDITURES JAN.-DEC. 1994 AND JAN.-OCT.1995 | TOTAL EXPENDITURES JAN.-DEC. 1994* | TOTAL EXPENDITURES JAN.-OCT.1995** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 010 Established Posts | 1,652,011.06 | 913,536.40 | 738,474.66 |
| 040 Consultants | 660,126.61 | 480,671.08 | 179,455.53 |
| 050 Overtime & night differential | 3,366.80 | 3,366.80 | - |
| 100 Common staff costs | 698,517.31 | 408,162.79 | 290,354.52 |
| 113 Representation allowance | 1,186.21 | 736.21 | 450.00 |
| 242 Other official travel of staff | 365,001.87 | 130,547.51 | 234,454.36 |
| 430 Rental of furniture and equipment | 28,034.58 | 15,841.75 | 12,192.83 |
| 440 Communications | 115,577.90 | 84,259.12 | 31,318.78 |
| 451 Official Functions | 634.23 | - | 634.23 |
| 490 Miscellaneous Services | 9,566.93 | 8,427.05 | 1,139.88 |
| 500 Supplies and materials | 5,790.24 | 1,637.15 | 4,153.09 |
| 610 Office furniture and equipment | 1,659.47 | 711.24 | 948.23 |
| 620 Data processing equipment | 36,593.60 | 28,371.29 | 8,222.31 |
| **TOTAL** | **3,578,066.81** | **2,076,268.39** | **1,501,798.42** |

* As recorded in final 1994 allotment report
** As recorded in 31.10.1995 allotment report

APPENDIX C

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TRUST FUND RECEIVED AS OF 30 NOVEMBER 1995
(US DOLLARS)

| Donor country/Organisation | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Australia | 34,915 | 86,160 | - | 121,075 |
| Canada | 134,982 | 134,381 | 5,344 | 274,707 |
| Cyprus | 1,000 | - | - | 1,000 |
| Denmark | - | 200,000 | 244,410 | 444,410 |
| Finland | - | 89,522 | - | 89,522 |
| France | 105,542 | 15,842 | - | 121,384 |
| Greece | - | 5,000 | - | 5,000 |
| Israel | - | - | 3,158 | 3,158 |
| Japan | - | 123,300 | 505,330 | 628,630 |
| Kenya | - | 5,000 | - | 5,000 |
| Netherlands | 555,139 | - | - | 555,139 |
| Norway | 187,971 | 62,978 | 142,154 | 393,103 |
| Sweden | - | 128,287 | 134,000 | 262,287 |
| Switzerland | 125,310 | 468,884 | 449,500 | 1,043,694 |
| Tunisia | - | 2,000 | - | 2,000 |
| United States of America | 200,000 | 100,000 | - | 300,000 |
| | | | | |
| European Commission | - | - | 64,875 | 64,875 |
| World Meteorological Organization | - | - | 16,304 | 16,304 |
| UNEP | 300,000 | 50,000 | 80,000 | 430,000 |
| **TOTAL** | **1,644,859** | **1,471,354** | **1,645,075** | **4,761,288** |

## APPENDIX D

## TRUST FUND EXPENDITURES FOR 1994-1995 AS OF 31 OCTOBER 1995

(US DOLLARS)

| Object code | Description | Expenditure |
|---|---|---|
| 030 | General temporary assistance | 1,227,899 |
| 050 | Overtime | 7,650 |
| 060 | Ad hoc expert groups | 36,792 |
| 080 | Personal service contract | 16,107 |
| 210 | Travel of participants | 302,425 |
| 220 | Travel of staff to official meeting | 28,820 |
| 242 | Other official travel of staff | 314,450 |
| 300 | Contractual services | 97,709 |
| 400 | General operating expenses | 20,945 |
| 800 | Fellowships/grants/contributions | 601,189 |
| | Total | 2,653,986 |

APPENDIX E

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL VOLUNTARY FUND RECEIVED AS OF 30 NOVEMBER 1995
(US DOLLARS)

| Donor country/Organisation | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Australia | - | 65,735 | - | 65,735 |
| Austria | - | 10,000 | - | 10,000 |
| Benin | - | 1,000 | - | 1,000 |
| Canada | 77,662 | - | 42,257 | 119,919 |
| Denmark | 199,985 | - | - | 199,985 |
| France | 103,999 | 64,540 | - | 168,539 |
| Germany | 185,827 | - | - | 185,827 |
| Greece | - | 5,000 | - | 5,000 |
| Ireland | - | 71,500 | 16,391 | 87,891 |
| Italy | 90,744 | - | - | 90,744 |
| Japan | - | 300,000 | 200,000 | 500,000 |
| Korea | - | 50,000 | - | 50,000 |
| Norway | 199,985 | 226,359 | - | 426,344 |
| Panama | - | - | 500 | 500 |
| Portugal | - | 15,000 | - | 15,000 |
| Spain | 42,024 | 19,985 | 26,479 | 88,488 |
| Sweden | 262,280 | - | 150,128 | 412,408 |
| Switzerland | 66,013 | - | - | 66,013 |
| United Kingdom | 111,727 | - | - | 111,727 |
| United States of America | 50,000 | - | - | 50,000 |
| | | | | |
| European Commission | - | - | 64,875 | 64,875 |
| **TOTAL** | **1,390,246** | **829,119** | **500,630** | **2,719,995** |

**APPENDIX F**

**CCD SECRETARIAT STAFFING SITUATION AS OF 30 NOVEMBER 1995**

| Category | Regular Budget | Extrabudgetary resources | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| D-2 | 1 | 0 | | 1 |
| D-1/L-6 | 1 | 0 | | 1 |
| P-5/L-5 | 1 | 1<br>1<br>1 | Financed by Canada<br>Financed by Switzerland<br>Financed by WMO | 4 |
| P-4/L-4 | 1 | 0 | | 1 |
| P-3/L-3 | 1 | 1 | Financed by Sweden | 2 |
| P-1/L-1 | 0 | 1 | | 1 |
| **Total D/P & L** | **5** | **5** | | **10** |
| General service | 4 | 1<br>1 | <br>Financed by WMO | 6 |
| **Grand total** | **9** | **7** | | **16** |